



Francis Scott Key Bridge Collapses After Being Struck by Ship

A container ship struck a support pillar of the Francis Scott Key Bridge at 1:28 this morning, causing a partial collapse of the bridge.

The bridge, spanning the lower Patapsco River and Baltimore Harbor in Maryland, opened on March 23, 1977 and, with a main span of 1,200 feet, was the longest continuous truss bridge in the world at the time. The entire bridge was 8, 636 feet long.

The container ship *Dali*, registered in Singapore, was headed to Colombo, Sri Lanka, when it struck one of the bridge's main support pillars. Twenty-two crew members were on board the 95,000 gross tonne ship at the time of the incident. As noted by [Fox News](#), "The large vessel appeared to catch fire before becoming disabled. Footage of the incident shows the lights going out multiple times on the vessel in question prior to impact, suggesting the collision may have been due to a power failure."

Some suspect foul play, as the ship appeared to veer off course and steer straight into the support pillar.

Maryland Department of Transportation Secretary Paul Wiedefeld told reporters that the FBI was on the scene and he did not believe the incident was linked to terrorism. According to Fox,

Wiedefeld confirmed there were people on the bridge at the time, though no specific numbers were immediately provided. A construction crew of unknown size was also doing routine maintenance at the time of the collapse....

Officials are continuing to respond to the catastrophic collapse as an active search and rescue mission, with the U.S. Coast Guard searching for any survivors in the water.

The water below the bridge is about 50 feet deep, and the water temperature was about 47 degrees during the predawn collapse.

According to Baltimore Fire Chief James Wallace, two people were pulled from the water after the collapse, with one of them in serious condition. He said authorities "may be looking for upwards of seven people," but that number could change.



AP Images

Damaged section of Francis Scott Key Bridge



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